

## A second species of the African genus *Peckolus* Scholtz & Howden (Scarabaeidae: Scarabaeini)

by

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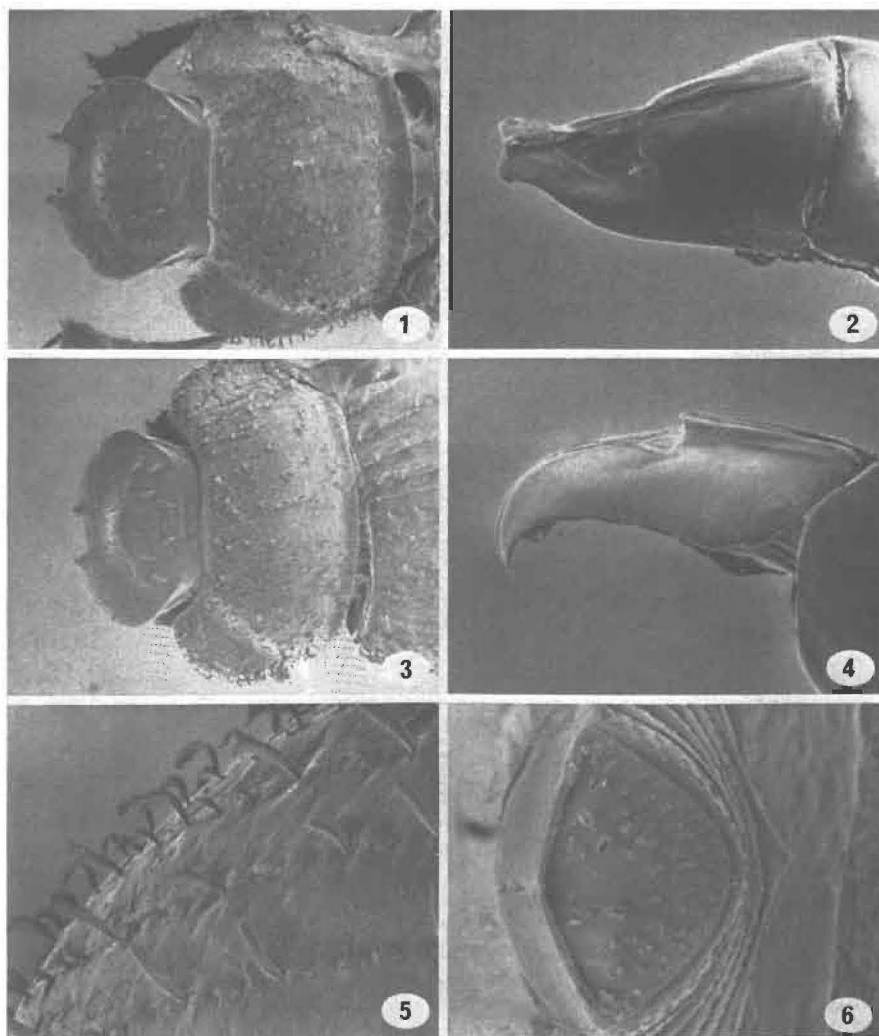
A second species, *alpinus* n. sp., in the genus *Peckolus*, is described, figured, and compared to the type species, *parvus* Scholtz & Howden. The new species occurs in relict native forest near Graskop and Pilgrim's Rest, Transvaal.

### INTRODUCTION

Since the completion of "A revision of the African Canthonina" (Scholtz & Howden 1987) a second species of the odd relict African genus *Peckolus* Scholtz & Howden has been collected by S. & J. Peck. Specimens were taken in carrion-baited pit traps set in the ground in ravines containing dense native forest along the Drakensberg escarpment in the Graskop-Pilgrim's Rest area. There was a good ground cover of forest litter and there were frequent heavy rains during the trapping period. The type species of the genus, *parvus*, was also collected by the Pecks in relict forest at the Cathedral Peak Forest Station, approximately 500 km to the south along the Drakensberg escarpment. As both *parvus* and the new species are flightless it is not surprising that they differ.

The genus *Peckolus* can easily be distinguished from other African Canthonina by the following combination of characters: size small, 1.8-2.4 mm long; eye absent dorsally; lateral edges of pronotum broadly explanate; conjointly convex elytra with sides curved ventrally to inflexed pseudoepipleura; metathoracic wings absent; metasternum between middle coxae relatively narrow, slightly wider than distance between clypeal teeth, sides of metasternum parallel to rounded apex.

The new species does not significantly alter the generic description (Scholtz & Howden 1987: 107).



Figs 1-6. *Peckolus* species. 1,2. *Peckolus parvus* Scholtz & Howden: 1, Head and pronotum; 2, male genitalia. 3-6. *Peckolus alpinus* **sp. nov.**: 3, Head and pronotum; 4, male genitalia; 5, dorsal portion of elytron; 6, pygidium of male.

***Peckolus alpinus* sp. nov.**, Figs 3–6.

Holotype, male. Length 2.1 mm, greatest width 1.3 mm. Dorsally brown to dark brown.

*Head* (Fig. 3) with two relatively stout clypeal teeth, clypeal margin on each side lacking distinct bead; clypeus anteriorly with minute punctures, punctures becoming gradually larger and distinctly annular on vertex.

*Pronotum* with midline length to greatest width ratio 1 : 2; surface similar to that of *parvus* except setae distinctly stouter; posterior pronotal edge less strongly reflexed and with reflexed area narrower than in *parvus* (Fig. 1).

*Elytron* (Fig. 5) dorsally with seven rows of setae between suture and recurved edge, each row consisting of widely spaced large setae with variable curvature; from one to four small, recurved setae present between each pair of larger setae.

*Pygidium* (Fig. 6) with surface contours similar to *parvus* but with more numerous setae.

*Melasternum* not noticeably different from *parvus*.

*Genitalia* (Fig. 4) with each paramere in lateral view evenly curved ventrally in apical half to abruptly rounded apex; in *parvus* (Fig. 2) each paramere is recurved dorsally near apex with apex briefly flared and truncate.

Allotype. Female, length 1.9 mm, greatest width 1.3 mm; similar to male externally except clypeal teeth slightly longer, relatively more slender.

**MATERIAL EXAMINED.** Holotype. South Africa, Transvaal, 11 km S.E. Pilgrims Rest, 1500 m, 21–30.xii.1985, S. & J. Peck, relict forest carrion traps (Transvaal Museum, Pretoria). Allotype, same data as holotype (Transvaal Museum). Paratypes. 1 male, 7 females: 3, same data as holotype; 2, same data as holotype except 19–26.xii.1985; 3, Transvaal, 3 km S. Graskop, 21–25.xii.1985, S. & J. Peck, relict forest, Natural Bridge, carrion trap. Paratypes are deposited in the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria and Howden collection.

**REMARKS.** Size variation is slight, the paratypes varying in length from 1.9 to 2.3 mm. The specimens from Graskop (spelled “Grasstrap” on the labels) have the clypeal teeth more widely separated than the specimens from Pilgrim’s Rest. There are no other obvious variations in specimens either within or between localities. The specific epithet “*alpinus*” has two possible connotations, one meaning “of high mountains” and the other meaning “dwarfed”; both seem pertinent for this species.

Externally *P. parvus* (Fig. 1) and *P. alpinus* (Fig. 3) differ primarily in the proportions of the pronotum and in the reflexed edge of the posterior pronotal margin. In *P. parvus* the posterior pronotal margin is strongly reflexed and the median length to width ratio of the pronotum is 4 : 7; in *P. alpinus* the ratio is 1 : 2.

The most striking difference in the two species occurs in the male genitalia; in *P. parvus* (Fig. 2) each paramere in lateral view curves slightly upward near the apex while in *P. alpinus* (Fig. 4) each paramere is curved downward near the apex.

In our revision of the African Canthonina (1987) we suggested that *Peckolus* might be related to *Endroedyolus* Scholtz & Howden, *Outenikwanus* Scholtz & Howden or *Panelus* Lewis. The discovery of the second species of *Peckolus* indicates a considerable variation in the shape of the genitalia, with *P. alpinus* genitalia indicating a closer relationship with either *Endroedyolus* or *Outenikwanus* than with *Panelus*.

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### REFERENCE

- SCHOLTZ, C. H. & H. F. HOWDEN, 1987. A revision of the African Canthonina (Coleoptera: Scarabaeidae: Scarabaeinae). *Journal of the Entomological Society of Southern Africa* **50** (1): 75—119.

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